ARRA Broadband Grants Rhode Island Workshop

July 16, 2009

Rhode Island Broadband Review Committee

Rhode Island Broadband Review Committee Charge

Appointed by Governor to encourage applicants and collaborative efforts, to review ARRA broadband grant applications, to obtain public comment, and to recommend for endorsement projects that would provide the greatest service to the citizens of Rhode Island

Rhode Island Broadband Review Committee Membership

- John Landers, co-chair, Rhode Island Department of Information Technology
- Michael Pickett, co-chair, Brown University
- Thomas Ahern, Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
- Carole Cotter, Lifespan
- Stuart Freiman, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation
- Christopher Long, Office of the Governor
- Tony Lupinacci, Rhode Island Department of Information Technology
- David Porter, University of Rhode Island
- Richard Prull, Rhode Island College
- Stephen Vieira, Community College of Rhode Island

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Purpose:

- To preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery;

- To assist those most impacted by the recession;

- To provide investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances in science and health;

- To invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits; and

- To stabilize state and local government budgets.

Recovery Act Broadband Initiatives

- **$7.2 billion to expand access to broadband services in the United States**
  - **$4.7B: Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)** from Commerce Department National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
    - Broadband Infrastructure-Related Projects
    - Public Computer Centers (at least $200 Million)
    - Innovative Programs to Encourage Broadband Adoption Sustainable (at least $250 Million)
  - **$2.5B: Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP)** from Agriculture Department Rural Utilities Service (RUS) – Requirement for 75% rural probably excludes RI
    - Distance Learning
    - Telemedicine
    - Broadband
    - **$350M Broadband Data Mapping under Broadband Data Improvement Act – rules yet to be issued**

Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP): Rural Utilities Service (RUS) $2.5B

Purpose: facilitating broadband deployment in rural communities

Must be 75% rural – RI doesn't meet this standard and it is unlikely that we are eligible for funding under this program (at least under the current rules)

The rest of these notes will focus on the BTOP program

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) $4.7B

Purpose:

- Extend access to unserved areas

- Improve access to underserved areas

- Expand access to wide range of institutions and individuals including vulnerable populations

- Desirable attributes: economic growth and job creation potential; benefits to education, health care and public safety; viability, sustainability and scalability; serving the public interest; creation of models for future investors

- Required 20% matching funds from applicant

Selected/Partial Definitions
(see NOFA for detailed definitions)

- Unserved – broadband access (768 kbps download speeds) unavailable for 90% of households in funded service area

- Underserved – rate of broadband subscribership in the funded service area is 40% or less

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) $4.7B

Three Categories of Eligible Projects:

1. Broadband Infrastructure for unserved and underserved areas

   – Last –Mile (infrastructure directly connecting end-users, businesses, anchor institutions, etc).

   – Middle-Mile (infrastructure providing interoffice transport, backhaul, internet connectivity, special access). Project benefits reviewed on impact on area, level of need, network capacity, affordability (service pricing compared to existing broadband services in proposed service area), interconnectivity.

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) $4.7B cont.

2. Public Computer Centers – at least $200M

Projects that expand public access to broadband service and enhance broadband capacity at entities that permit public use (e.g. community colleges, public libraries, etc). Project benefits reviewed on availability (fees, hours, restrictions, etc), quality/relevance of training, availability & qualifications of staff.

Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) $4.7B – cont.

3. Sustainable Broadband Adoption – at least $250M

Innovative projects that promote broadband demand particularly among vulnerable population groups where utilization has been low (e.g. projects for broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment or support). Project benefits reviewed on # of new users, cost/new user, innovation.

Some Logistics

- Virtually any public, private or non-profit entity may apply

- Three rounds of applications ($1.6B summer 2009, winter 2009, spring 2010)

- First round applications must be totally completed and submitted to NTIA by 5PM, August 14, 2009 – first round winners announced around November 7, 2009

- All rounds of funding awarded no later than September 30, 2010.

Application Process and Detailed Information

- See http://broadbandusa.gov for detailed Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFA), slides from regional workshops, application forms, fact sheets and detailed instructions

Federal Review Process

- Initial screening for completeness

- Step one-Applications reviewed by NTIA/RUS (scored by three independent reviewers)

- Step Two-Additional details requested; due diligence review by experts; applications meeting basic criteria then sent back to Governor's broadband review team to prioritize and recommend those that meet greatest needs

The Broadband Review Team will use the following criteria in evaluating applications under consideration by NTIA:

- Experience in building and managing a network
- Ability to get a network built quickly (funded projects need to be completed 2 years from date of grant)
- Ability to pay the 20% match
- Sustainability, an assurance that the network has a business model after the initial 2 years
- Partnerships and the ability to have the network serve as many people as possible, especially public safety, healthcare, higher education and libraries.
- Spur job creation
- Applicants will be required to submit a system design and project timeline, certified by a professional engineer, for projects requesting funds over $ 1 million.

Questions and Comments